

Exhibit 6

Going to great lengths



TO HEAR PHIL MICKELSON TELL IT, THE top-secret Titleist prototype golf balls in his bag do everything but glow in the dark. They travel longer. They react like homing devices from 150 yards in, not juicing off greens like the old solid-core balls but sticking to putting surfaces like Velcro. And here's the scary part: They self-correct. "I tested a couple of other balls, two of the new ones on the market," Mickelson said last week. "I told [Acushnet president and CEO] Wally [Uihlein] at the U.S. Open, 'You've always had the best product on the market, but right now there are good products out there. I'd like to see what you have in R&D coming out.'"

That, as Uihlein admitted Monday, was the clarion call. Titleist had the patent on a new-age ball to counter the offensives mounted by Nike and Callaway, but Mickelson's nudge pushed Titleist's "Laboratory Test Ball" into production. As Uihlein said, "It would be foolish and naïve to think that 30 days after a discussion I had with Phil Mickelson that *voilà*, something falls out of the white-coated laboratory that represents the magic elixir."

Hey, whatever it takes. Mickelson had the Titleist prototypes in his bag Sept. 11 in his "Shell's Wonderful World of Golf" match against Fred Couples. He reached all the par-5s with nothing more than a 6-iron. On the final hole, he bombed a drive in the 445-yard range. "I'm playing a game right now that is different from any game I ever played," said Mickelson.

Over at Callaway, the spokesman is Arnold Palmer, as much a traditionalist as anyone in the game, the man who first whispered in Buzz Taylor's ear in 1998 that technology was threatening to ruin the integrity of the game, giving the then-USGA president a platform on which to stand. Two summers later Palmer is featured in a stunning new Callaway print ad, wearing a pink shirt, holding the company's red Rule 35 ball, grinning from ear to ear. There is not a word of type on the image—Callaway wants the picture to say it all. Palmer averaged more than 300 yards in driving distance at the Novell Utah Showdown in Utah last month—and shot 69, his low round of the year—using the Callaway ball. In a Callaway infomercial, the man ranked No. 1 in the *Golf World Business Personality Index* says the joy has returned to the game. It lends tremendous credibility to the hard-core efforts being made at Callaway's headquarters in Carlsbad to justify its \$170 million investment in a golf ball plant.

Nike, meanwhile, has Tiger Woods and his performance at the Canadian Open. Using his Tour Accuracy ball, Woods launched a drive at Glen Abbey's par-5 18th hole in the second round that traveled 380 yards. Two days later, on the same hole with the tournament on the line, he hit a 218-yard 6-iron from a fairway bunker that looked as though it was cutting into the

water, made a slight left-hand turn in the air and pitched 15 feet behind the flag. Afterward, he said he should have hit a 7-iron.

Woods has won six of nine starts since switching to the Tour Accuracy, including three major championships. He didn't three-putt once at Pebble Beach. He didn't hit a bunker at St. Andrews. He completed the career grand slam. Yet those two bombs in Canada were the shots that have come to define his phenomenal summer.

"We were hoping to get him in the ball after the majors," said Kel Devlin, director of tour operations for Nike. "Now we wish we had him in it before the Masters."

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The bottom line is this is more than a trend. When Mark O'Meara won two majors in 1998 with the Spalding Strata, it did not send Callaway, Nike and finally Titleist off in mad pursuit of making the equivalent three-piece, thin-covered ball. Now the game has changed. The battle between Ely Callaway, Phil Knight and Wally Uihlein right now isn't about who can build the longest driver, but who can make the best solid-core, non-wound ball.

If all the claims for these new solid balls are true, the USGA may be in a quandary. The USGA may need a standard other than the Initial Velocity Test and they are working on one. But construction delays have pushed back the introduction of its new golf ball monitor. If and when it establishes one, any roll back in standards could cost the USGA millions in legal fees, and if the battle goes to court, the manufacturers are likely to fight for every innovation that's in their research and development pipelines. "My reaction is not specific to what Tiger Woods or Phil Mickelson may be playing," insists Dick Rugge, senior technical director for the USGA. "The USGA has been studying balls for some time and is considering different options on what we might do in the future. We have not yet announced any particular plan in that regard. I think the results Mr. Woods gets are primarily based on his incredible skill."

For now, the scientists just keep pushing the envelope. In a telephone interview Sunday, Gary Player said he believes it's only a matter of time before an athlete comes along who is bigger and stronger than the 6-foot-2, 180-pound Woods and drives the first green at Augusta.

It sounds as though Phil Mickelson has a chance to do it next year.